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IN THIS MONTH OF MAY

ON MAY 19, 1969, PRESIDENT HO CHI MINH IS 79



NOBODY can any longer have any doubt about the Vietnamese people's unshakable will to fight on until their rights to independence and freedom are recognised. B 52s, still less Marine or Air Cavalry divisions, won't have much effect on that. So long as an American soldier pitches his tent on Vietnamese soil, there will always be a Vietnamese combatant to make life untenable for him. Again the Vietnamese people are writing an epic many a time renewed in the course of the centuries.

In the face of powerful invasions, a 15th century poem declared:

On this land, only a Vietnamese king shall reign.

So have decided the Books of Heaven.

In the 13th, 15th, 18th centuries, this unswerving determination to safeguard national independence foiled aggressions by the most powerful armies of those times. In the 19th century, hardly had the foreign colonist landed in Nam Bo when rose Nguyen Trung Truc's voice: "So long as a blade of grass grows on this land, there shall remain men to fight the aggressor."

The 20th century has seen more foreign aggressions than ever in Viet Nam's history. Within a quarter of a century, French, Japanese, Chiang Kai-shek, then American troops have in turn invaded the national territory. Never has the gap been so big between the aggressor's material forces and those of the Vietnamese people. Never have the latter had to mobilise so much energy, evince such dauntlessness, show such grim determination in their struggle.

Never has the appeal for national independence, coming from times immemorial, resounded so loud and clear in the conscience of the men of Viet Nam. On this hard road to liberation, there has been a man whose destiny is embodied in that of the nation and

whose voice expresses the most faithfully the entire people's aspirations to independence and freedom. For more than half a century, this man, HO CHI MINH, has devoted his life wholly to the service of the fatherland.

For the Vietnamese people, the person of Ho Chi Minh evokes even more than the age-old aspiration to national independence. For when a Vietnamese thinks back along the centuries, he hears the unknown clamour of hungry and oppressed crowds. With Ho Chi Minh, the Vietnamese people have understood that to get rid of the foreign occupier would be but a fruitless enterprise if that combat did not open up new social prospects. The landless peasant, the slave-worker, the "coolie" in the sorrowful words of the colonists, the intellectual held in bondage, the Highlander looked down upon as a sub-human being — all have found in the course charted by Ho Chi Minh the way to their own liberation.

Every man's destiny is now closely bound to that of the fatherland. Independence and freedom are welded into an indivisible bloc, against which the American war machine has crashed.

In this month of May, when President Ho Chi Minh is having his 79th birthday, the Vietnamese people, in both North and South, are happy to see him standing at the helm, as always deeply human, sensitive to all the aspirations of the people, as always firm and unwavering in upholding the nation's fundamental rights, as always clear-sighted, able to adapt himself to the most complex realities, and to practise with great ingenuity that "art of the possible" which makes great statesmen.

In these days when the fight against American aggression is entering a decisive stage, the Vietnamese people, in both North and South, turn to their President and, to wish him a happy birthday, simply tell him: "We shall fight on until victory!"

While U.S. and puppet generals claim that the PLAF are out of breath,

Since May 11, Hundreds Of Major Targets Hit Overnight Throughout South Viet Nam

- Nearly all U.S. division and brigade HQs around Saigon, the most important airbases and other positions in nearly twenty towns and scores of urban centres stormed.
- SAIGON, DA NANG, HUE, DALAT, CAM RANH were among the targets hit.
- Heavy enemy losses in men and materials.

Just Position, Serious Attitude

(Excerpts from a commentary by Gial Phung Press Agency (GPA) on May 11, 1969 on the NFL to-point overall solution)

LIKE the NFL Political Program and 5 points put forward by the Front's press, the Front's present to-point solution is entirely based on the prevailing situation in South Viet Nam.

This situation can be described as follows: over the past 15 years, carrying out their scheme to invade South Viet Nam in order to transform it into a new-type colony and military base for the U.S., the U.S. imperialists have switched over from armed intervention to direct aggression against South Viet Nam by committing their troops there in a most cynical violation of the independence, sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity of South Viet Nam, and in defiance of the fundamental principles of the 1954 Geneva Agreements on Viet Nam and all norms of international law.

On the other hand, under the glorious banner of the NFL, the South Viet Nam people rallied in a monolithic bloc, have been putting up a heroic and persevering fight against the U.S. aggressors and their henchmen, and have recorded greater and greater successes.

Following its heavy setbacks in the two zones of Viet Nam, the U.S. has been compelled to halt unconditionally the bombardments on the whole of the DRVN and accept a four-party conference in Paris to seek a political solution to the Viet Nam problem, while it is actually pertinaciously sticking to its aggressive scheme. Nurturing the illusion to secure a position of strength, the U.S. government has left no stone unturned to push up the war, prolong the illegal presence of the U.S. expeditionary corps in South Viet Nam and to maintain in power the bellicose and rotten Thieu-Ky-Huong puppet

clique as a tool to achieve its neo-colonialist designs in the South Viet Nam. It has proved that since he became President of the United States, in spite of his multiple professions of "peace" and suggestions of "peaceful solution" to the Viet Nam conflict, Nixon has been concurrently beefing up the U.S. expeditionary corps and trying to strengthen and re-occupy the puppet army. For several months now, in frantic execution of the "accelerated pacification" program, U.S. puppet and satellite troops have been stepping up terror raids, piling fresh abominable crimes against the South Viet Nam people, of which the Ba Lang Nam, Kong P'ing, Thau Hiep, the U Minh jungle, etc. mass massacres are only a few gruesome samples. The U.S. has also been intensifying B-52 wanton bombings which have taken a heavy toll of civilian lives, right in the areas bordering on major cities. In the towns and areas still under U.S. puppet control, the Thieu-Ky-Huong administration, agents of U.S. imperialism, has been openly suppressing all aspirations for peace, independence, and neutrality, resorting to terror, arrests and imprisonment against all those who urge the establishment of a peace cabinet desiring to negotiate in good faith with the NFL. Meanwhile, at the Paris Conference on Viet Nam the U.S. representative has sought every way and means to distort the truth and conceal the criminal aggression by the United States and the treason and bellicosity of the Thieu-Ky-Huong clique. It has raised unreasonable demands in an attempt to evade the fundamental issue that of U.S. aggression which must be brought to an end by U.S. withdrawal of all its troops

from South Viet Nam. There is solid evidence to show that the U.S. still leathens to accept a peaceful settlement to the Viet Nam problem on the basis of the five points of the NFL and the four points of the DRVN Government.

The real situation as epitomized above proves that the brutal policy of aggression of the U.S. imperialists is the deep-seated origin and immediate cause of the present crisis in South Viet Nam. At the same time it shows that U.S. obstinacy is blocking all progress of the Paris Conference on Viet Nam.

At such a juncture, the NFL's principles and main content of the overall solution of the South Viet Nam problem, to help restore peace in Viet Nam, assumes a particularly important significance. First of all, it is an unequivocal expression of the correct position of the Front which makes it a point to defend the fundamental national rights and the legitimate aspirations of the South Vietnamese people. It is also a proof of the Front's goodwill. In the interests of the South Viet Nam people and with regard to the Front's desire of the American people, the Front has been exerting untiring efforts to help the Paris Conference progress, put an end to the war at the earliest date and restore peace in Viet Nam. The sensible and reasonable measures proposed in the overall solution of the NFL are unmistakably testifies to the spirit of national concord and the identity of mind of all strata of the people in the resistance to U.S. aggression and in the effort to build a peaceful, independent, democratic and neutral South Viet Nam. The Front's overall solution is a sound and logical basis for the settlement of the

South Viet Nam problem, a contribution to the restoration of peace in Viet Nam. It opens up bright prospects for consolidating peace and security in the Indo-Chinese peninsula and Southeast Asia. It offers the U.S. government a good chance to end, in an honourable way, the utterly unpopular war that has smeared the honour of the U.S. nation.

As has been pointed out by progressive opinion all over the world, the NFL programme is a momentous move. It is a fresh contribution of the NFL to the progress of the Paris Conference, to the cessation of the aggression in South Viet Nam and the peaceful settlement of the South Viet Nam question.

The Indo-Chinese peoples are facing a common enemy, the U.S. imperialist aggressor. Bound by an age-old friendship, the peoples of Viet Nam, Cambodia and Laos will further close their ranks in the defence and consolidation of the peace, independence, neutrality and territorial integrity of their respective countries. The recent decision of the Cambodian Royal Government headed by Chief of State Norodom Sihanouk and the South Viet Nam NFL to raise to ambassadorial level their diplomatic relations is a fine token of this fraternal and durable friendship.

Progressives in the five continents have always re-

served the deepest sympathy and the warmest support for the fight of the Vietnamese people against U.S. aggression, for national salvation. They have approved and backed the five points of the NFL, and will certainly apply greater pressure on the U.S. government to accept the overall solution advanced by the NFL, withdraw all U.S. and satellite troops from South Viet Nam without setting any condition, and leave the South Viet Nam people and the Vietnamese people to settle their own affairs without foreign interference.

The American people have been fully aware of the sufferings and mournings brought to the South Vietnamese people by the aggression of the U.S. and the growing disasters caused to the Americans by the war of aggression initiated and kept up in South Viet Nam by the U.S. Government. They will surely join efforts with other peoples in the world to demand that the Nixon administration respect the fundamental national rights of the Vietnamese people, stop its unjust war of aggression and aggression against the peoples of the world, and restore peace in South Viet Nam.

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PUPPET ADMINISTRATION'S FRANTIC RESPONSE TO NFL PROPOSALS

CONFRONTED with the NFL just stand and reasonable demands embodied in its ten points and with the widespread support for them, the U.S. administration's response has been one of caution and its Secretary of State William P. Rogers declared on May 9 that the U.S. would "examine carefully" the NFL's overall solution.

Only the Thieu-Ky-Huong administration has reacted with unwarranted arrogance and inconsiderate hastiness. A communique, loose in wording and lacking in cogent arguments, was published by it on May 9 in reply to the NFL offer. Again, the Saigon adminis-

tration styled itself as a "constitutional government", and showed its opposition to a provisional coalition government and to neutrality. U.S. absurd demands for "mutual withdrawal", "restoration of the demilitarized zone", and "exchange of POWs" were also repeated by the puppet regime.

The unsavoury behaviour of the U.S. - paid henchmen in Saigon came as no surprise at all. The NFL's overall solution — whose principles and gist see to the people's basic national rights, and indicate a sensible way to the settlement of practical problems, conforming to

the spirit of national concord and reality — has dealt a damaging blow at their policy of war and betrayal and their reactionary, corrupted regime. Therefore, it is clear that the Thieu-Ky-Huong frantic reaction to the overall solution put forward by the South Viet Nam National Front for Liberation, is aimed at prolonging indefinitely the occupation of South Viet Nam by U.S. expeditionary troops to se-

crete a backing for it, and at maintaining its traitorous regime, which the South Vietnamese people have been militating to remove. The Saigon administration's hasty countermove is also aimed at intimidating people of various strata in South Viet Nam into withholding their support from the NFL's ten points.

The Thieu-Ky-Huong administration's effort is but a

last-ditch attempt. This triumvirate of traitors deems the NFL's just stand as much as a mole fears daylight. However, the more obstinately and impudently they act, the clearer their weakness will appear. Were it not for the protection by U.S. forces, they would not have been viable at all.

Shan Dan (The People)
May 11, 1969

VIET NAM COURIER

FATHERLAND FRONT HAILS NFL OVERALL SOLUTION

THE president of the Central Committee of the Viet Nam Fatherland Front at its recent session came out in warm support, in a statement, for the "principles and main content of the overall solution of the South Viet Nam problem to help restore peace in Viet Nam" presented on May 9 by the chief delegate of the NFL to the Paris Conference on Viet Nam.

The statement said:

"The Viet Nam Fatherland Front Central Committee warmly hails the NFL overall solution and regards it as a very important document likely to open an avenue to the settlement of the Viet Nam issue on the principle that the U.S. government should halt its aggression against Viet Nam and strictly respect the Vietnamese people's fundamental national rights.

"The Viet Nam Fatherland Front CC fully concurs with the position of the DRVN government delegation at the Paris Conference on Viet Nam, and declares its unreserved support for the NFL overall solution to the South Viet Nam problem. It is consistent with its own Political Program.

"The Viet Nam Fatherland Front CC entertains the firm conviction that the brotherly socialist countries, the peace-loving government and peoples in the world, progressives in the United States, the world peace and democratic organizations

aimed at placating the restive "minority" which was growing impatient of the continuation of the Thieu-Ky-Huong war. In his May 14 speech was nevertheless a clear expression of the U.S. ruling's intent to stick to South Viet Nam, to prolong their military occupation to help maintain and consolidation of the puppet administration and to achieve neo-colonialism in South Viet Nam.

Delivered 6 days after the NFL ten-point overall solution was made public, this speech placed on an equal footing the latter and Mr. Nixon's 8-point "peace program" and even the 6 points of traitor Nguyen Van Thieu: it is transparent that Mr. Nixon was resorting to the old method of the imperialists which makes no difference between the aggressor — U.S. imperialism — and those who oppose aggression — the Vietnamese people.

The U.S. President did not say a word about the Vietnamese people's fundamental national rights as recognized by the 1954 Geneva Agreements. The reason was quite simple: the Washington rulers had precisely been violating in a gross manner those rights by sending their troops to make war on the Vietnamese people, and they were the least of all men prepared to respect them now.

That Mr. Nixon simply ignored the Vietnamese people's fundamental national rights was fully understandable: he objected to the principal contradiction which should stem

from the respect for those rights, namely withdrawal of the U.S. troops from South Viet Nam, and satellite troops, without any condition whatsoever. In its overall solution, the NFL insisted on the primordial importance of this principle. In its overall solution, the NFL insisted on the primordial importance of this principle. In its overall solution, the NFL insisted on the primordial importance of this principle.

of national concord without any party trying to impose its will on the political regime. In turning a deaf ear to this proposal, he only revealed his design to continue in office at all costs the present puppet administration, a group of fire eaters and corrupt traitors loathed by everyone in South Viet Nam.

Mr. Nixon admitted in his May 14 speech that the Viet Nam war was the most difficult in all U.S. history and constituted the hardest and most urgent issue facing the American people. One wonders how he can put an end to it if he persists, as he is doing, in following his neo-colonialist path.

Why this prolonged military occupation? One may understand Mr. Nixon's intention by referring to his proposals on South Viet Nam general elections. As he saw it, these elections should take place while U.S. troops were still in their bases in South Viet Nam and while puppet troops were kept intact. Prior to that, Mr. Nixon urged all individuals and groups to "renounce the use of force" thereby suggesting that the South Vietnamese people lay down their weapons and rally the Thieu-Ky-Huong clique of U.S. agents. The U.S. chief executive apparently ignored the NFL proposals concerning the formation of a provisional coalition government through negotiation between South Vietnamese political forces in a spirit

which, for the sake of justice, have been championing the Viet Nam people's anti-U.S. aggression cause, will increase their support and assistance to the Vietnamese people toward complete victory, actively back the NFL overall solution, insist with firmness that the U.S. respect the Vietnamese people's fundamental national rights, stop its aggression and unconditionally pull out all U.S. and satellite troops from South Viet Nam."

THE DRVN National Assembly's Reunification Committee also concurred on May 13 an extraordinary session and issued a statement warmly hailing the NFL ten-point overall solution.

The Front's envoy drew the Conference's attention to the warm and wide-proof welcome extended to the ten-point overall solution put forward last week by the NFL. By contrast, he said, Mr. Nixon dwelt in his May 14 speech on his disagreement with several points, in that overall solution, and it appeared that such a disagreement was related to fundamental and crucial problems of the cessation of U.S. war of aggression. Thus, the NFL representative specified, Mr. Nixon did not accept the principle of the withdrawal of all U.S. and satellite troops from South Viet Nam with no condition attached. In so doing, he challenged the Vietnamese people's sacred right to resist aggression.

It is true that Mr. Nixon mentioned the South Vietnamese people's right to self-determination, but he made no bones of his plan to beef up the puppet army and to maintain the puppet Thieu-Ky-Huong administration of which he approved the 6-point proposal, the latter suggesting

PARIS CONFERENCE ON VIET NAM HOLDS 17th PLENARY SESSION (MAY 16, 1969)

PRELIMINARY remarks on Mr. Nixon's May 14 speech were given at the 17th session by Mr. Tran Bui Kiem, head of the NFL delegation, and by Mr. Xuan Thuy, leader of the DRVN government delegation, the latter reserving to himself the right to deal again with the same topic in the coming meetings.

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that the NFL lay down its weapons as a prerequisite to the political talks of the Saigon regime.

Mr. Xuan Thuy laid bare the unavowed intentions of Mr. Nixon to bind his intransigence on the withdrawal from South Viet Nam of all non-South Vietnamese forces, the U.S. president wanted merely to blur the line between the Vietnamese people's resistance to U.S. aggression on the one hand, and issues concerning only the Vietnamese on the other. He spoke of "free choice" for the South Vietnamese people, but all along the last 15 years, the United States has been striving to impose by force of arms on the South Vietnamese people puppet regimes absorbed by them, and at present it is still trying to impose on them the warlike and rotten Thieu-Ky-Huong triumvirate.

Mr. Xuan Thuy denounced U.S. war intensification in both zones of Viet Nam. He concluded that the U.S. rulers should show more realism if they want to reach a Viet Nam settlement. On the basis of the NFL's ten points the DRVN Government is disposed, the DRVN chief negotiator said, to conclude, with the parties concerned, agreements on problems raised in the May 8, 1969 document of the NFL.

Questioning a civilian by the U.S.-quitting



PRESIDENT HO'S BASKET OF FLOWERS

ON the morning of May 19, 1968, when the bridge builders of the 1st group of the road building and maintenance unit were engaged in a stirring drive for new achievements in honour of President Ho Chi Minh's birthday, important and happy news came to them; on the occasion of his 78th birthday, President Ho sent the road building and maintenance unit a basket of flowers, and on his suggestion, the service decided to present it to the cadres and workers of the 1st group which had just been awarded three Labour and Exploit orders after a year of work and fight on roads most strenuously struck by the enemy.

Everyone was overjoyed with joy as he stood in front of Uncle's basket of flowers. Phan Hoang, the group leader, said: "Usually when comes the birthday of our leader, we send him flowers with wishes for good health and longevity. Now, he instead sent us flowers on his birthday. His voice was choked with emotion, and all of us who were standing around him felt also profoundly moved."

Four days earlier, in this very place on the bank of this river and in the shade of this same grove of fir-trees, the 1st group had formally started the building of Bridge A. After three years of fighting against the U.S. war of destruction, the bridge builders of this unit had many times gone to many places, in Haiphong, Ha Vinh, Ha Tev, Hoa Binh, Vinh Phu, Ha Tinh, Quang Binh... to span a dozen important streams. But never had they tackled a bridge of such size. Not only was the shape of the bridge unfamiliar to them but the place where it was to be built was also different from any other they had seen.

"Shall we undertake to complete Bridge A in 15 days?" Not a fan at first uttered because of the complexity of the job. In fact, their technical standard still left much to desire. This type of bridge was too strange and too sophisticated. In the were the questions of manpower, tools, materials... and time was pressing.

But after many nights of heated discussions, group leader Phan Hoang succeeded in bringing home to his mates the feasibility of the project. There the group accepted the task and they named the bridge "May 19" as a reminder for them to act

upon President Ho's teachings. And they decided to finish the lower part of the bridge on the night of May 18 — four days after the work started — to greet May 19, President Ho Chi Minh's birthday.

And they have lived up to their pledge. The lower part of the bridge was completed on schedule, and the workers had saved 400 work-days, topping work productivity norms by 140%. That morning, when group leader Phan Hoang was about to go and report his unit's achievements to higher level in celebration of President Ho's birthday, group heard of the happy news that President Ho had sent them a basket of flowers. Hundreds of road builders, men and women, were overjoyed with joy as they stood gazing at the fresh flowers. They came from different parts of the country, from Lang Son in the northwestern to Ca Mau in the southernmost, and different nationalities: Kinh, Thai, Tay, Nung... President Ho's basket of flowers assumed for them a sacred meaning. Hoang Cong Tu, head of the 1st platoon, 3rd company, of the Tay national minority in Lang Son province, elite worker of the group, told his workmates: "This basket of flowers given to the communication and transport service as a token of Uncle Ho's affection is a source of immense encouragement to all the nationalities who are joining forces in fighting against U.S. aggression, for national salvation. After careful calculations, I came to the conclusion that we can slash the building time by ten days. What do you say to writing the higher level and proposing it?" Everyone was agreeable. Immediately afterward, before the basket of flowers presented by President Ho, the 1st group launched a new emulation drive under the slogan "Score new achievements to greet Uncle Ho's flowers, build Bridge A speedily and with high quality". After that the workers dispersed to their posts. And since then the construction site was bustling with more hectic activity. After each work-hour the loudspeaker announced a new record: the whole construction site surpassed productivity norms by 30% on May 19, 35% on May 20, and more than 40% on May 21. An unusual sense of urgency and enthusiasm pervaded the whole construction site of Bridge A on every night of May.



President Ho Chi Minh and members of the visiting NLF delegation (North Viet Nam, March 1969).

Encounters With "Uncle"

IT was with surprise and emotion that we learnt an honour and happiness, surpassing all our expectation would befall us: Uncle Ho was coming to our unit.

It was a fine day. The airfield spread endless in the bright morning sun that made the "silver swallows" (as the pilots of the People's Air Force called their jet interceptors—Ed.) glitter and added brightness to the beaming face of everyone of us. Uncle Ho stepped down.

Cheers and applause became more tumultuous as he walked up with brisk and steady paces to us. He smiled kindly holding up his cap and waving to us. His white hair fluttering gently in the wind, lent more augustness to his looks.

He wore the familiar khaki suit and the same rubber sandals. He inquired about the health of everyone of us. At the parking ground of the airfield where pilots on duty were at their posts, Uncle Ho asked Ho Van Quy:

"Do you feel the heat in the jets?"

"Yes, we do, Uncle. But we can stand any heat," replied the pilot, his eyes glued on President Ho.

Smiling happily, Uncle Ho swept all of us in a glance: "I am very glad to see you so young and so good in handling these modern planes. But if you don't hurry, the Southern guerrillas will leave you no more U.S. planes to shoot down."

We all laughed heartily and felt that his genial remark has instilled into everyone of us a higher sense of purpose. Leaving the runway, Uncle Ho came to inspect our living quarters where he

advised us to do everything possible to keep in fighting trim and increase our endurance. "You must always have your wits about you," he addressed the whole outfit. "Unite and stiffen your resolve to win right in the first fight."

In combat, while manning our "silver swallows" we always bear in mind the image of Uncle Ho during his visit to our unit and ever since we have shot down more and more enemy planes and for this we have been awarded the title "Heroic Unit" by the National Assembly and Government.

ON another occasion, Uncle Ho visited us after one of our most successful engagements.

"Which of you have shot down four U.S. planes upwards?" he asked with a cheerful smile.

"Comrades Hay, M. and T. Uncle," the political commissar of the People's Air Force replied on our behalf.

"And who have grounded three?"

A number of the pilots raised their hands.

"And two planes!" Uncle Ho went on.

Most of the rest put up their hands. "That's good," he said. "But you must try harder and bag more of them. And self-overestimation and self-satisfaction!"

All of us smiled happily and let his words deep in our minds. Then he gave us cigarettes and some sweets and posed for a snapshot with us. While he was chatting with us, Ho Van Quy and some other comrades who happened to sit next to him asked him: "How are you, Uncle?" "I'm as fit as fiddle, young man. But if you down more of those Yanks, I'll be even happier and fitter."

IT is a fact that Uncle Ho's visits, his congratulatory letters, the badges with his picture on them and the flowers he gave us have left refreshing memories which are always vivid in our minds whether we are engaged in training or in combat actions and his words always ring in our ears and act as a stimulant to our everyday behaviour and thinking.

45 U.S. Aircraft Downed in North Viet Nam Since Bombing Halt

On May 7, many U.S. aircraft attacked localities west of Quang Binh province. Local AA defence downed two F-105 Thunderchiefs within one hour. On May 11 two American pilotless planes were grounded, one in Ha Tay province, the other in Nghe An province. These fresh achievements brought to 45 the number of American planes shot down in North Viet Nam since November 2, 1968. Since between August 5, 1968, and May 11, 1969, our AA defence knocked down 328 enemy aircraft in all.

Leaving the runway, Uncle Ho came to inspect our living quarters where he

Why Is U.S. Aggression in South Viet Nam Doomed to Complete Failure

Commentary by Chien Thang

WITH the lightning offensives launched with a flying utterly upsetting for the enemy in the whole of South Viet Nam's territory in February 1968, the revolutionary and patriotic forces of the NLF have opened a new phase in the resistance against the U.S. aggressors for national salvation.

Staggered and bled white but always obstinate, the enemy is bending all his energies to get out of this desperate situation. While shifting his strategy and contriving new tactics or tactics readjusted to war needs, he leaves no stone unturned to induce people to believe that there has been a change for the better for him, and that the generals of the "Pentagon East", if given adequate time and means, are going to win the war, or at least, will try not to lose it.

Where does the truth lie, over this question which is foremost in the minds of a rather large section of public opinion?

As an answer to this, the Hanoi daily "Quan Doi Nhan Dan" (People's Army) has just published a long article under the pen of Chien Thang, an accredited military commentator.

For our readers, from the current issue, we are printing the 3 parts of this interesting commentary entitled "The new stage of the resistance to US aggression for national salvation is given a vigorous impulse and our people's complete victory is left in no doubt".

* Sub-heads, bold-faced emphases and foot-notes are ours—Ed.

I. U.S. PRESENT DEFENSIVE STRATEGY IN SOUTH VIET NAM WILL FAIL LIKE THEIR ILL-FATED COUNTER-OFFENSIVE STRATEGY

What does U.S. defensive strategy consist of?

IN the first phase of the U.S. imperialist local war of aggression, our people foiled their counter-offensive strategy. Our early Spring 1968 widespread offensives ushered in a new period in the fight against U.S. aggression for national salvation; it compelled an unexpected U.S. shift of strategy, and a placement of "search-and-destroy and pacification" strategy with the new "clear-and-hold" strategy, one of total defensive and passivity. Under their impetus, the U.S. "clear-and-hold" strategy met with series of setbacks and consequently, the U.S. was unable to complete its deployment until the end of 1968 although it had started it as early as February of that year.

The offensives of the South Viet Nam armed forces and people in early Spring this year put the U.S. defensive strategy to a severe test. It upset a whole series of calculations of the aggressors.

U.S. "clear-and-hold" strategy represented an important step backward as it amounted to giving up the objective Number one of the "local war" strategy which aimed at destroying the main force of the PLAF, and reducing the targets of all U.S. efforts in the defensive to two:

1. stave off serious losses for U.S. forces, and 2. prevent the further

collapse and disintegration of the puppet army and administration, so as to make the "de-Americanisation" of the war of aggression possible.

To attain those twofolds, the U.S. has worked the following strategic measures:

— Defence of key areas; on the battlefield, the U.S. has re-adjusted and re-disposed its forces which amount to shrink back "for greater toughness". Efforts are concentrated on protecting military bases and major cities. To the Saigon-Cholon sector the U.S. has committed a watch-dog force of over 100 infantry divisions, including the Air Cavalry battalion which is originally a strategically mobile unit, and a sizeable motorized force. To defend Da Nang, a major city base, it has put on the alert as many as 100,000 troops.

— Combination between inner and outer defence, between "hold" and "clear"; to this effect, the U.S. has mounted many military operations to destroy our logistic supplies in an effort to "forestall and nip the Viet Cong attacks in the bud". Such actions have taken place in Western Thua Thien, Western Quang Nam, the Western Highlands, the Nam Co Dong area, Da Nang, U Minh and the Mekong Delta (see map). In particular, the U.S. has been trying to grind out the PLAF with massive air and artillery fire-power. Abrams has been regarding his B-52's as just work-horse of the U.S. forces at

present. According to disclosures by the American press, B-52's have been daily dropping from 1,000 to 2,000, and sometimes nearly 3,000 tons, of bombs to hurt the adversary on the outer fringe.

— Application of the tactics of "troop encampments" formed into a multi-layer, multi-line defence around key areas. In the Hanoi central belt for the defence of Saigon, the central belt is the key U.S. defence line and the strongest of all directly manned by American troops.

— "Accelerated pacification" with ruthless means to terrorise and repress the urban people and devastate the rural areas for the seizure of territory and regroupment of peasants, in an effort to relieve pressure, end isolation and draft man-power for the rapid beefing up of the puppet troop strength by destroying our revolutionary bases and our springboards.

U.S. strategists' dream and battlefield reality

THE Americans reckoned that in the counter-offensive strategy, they would expose a lot of their flaws, but on the defensive, they could be very strong. With large troop strength, sweeping firepower and high mobility, they certainly would not be worsted when on the defensive. Many U.S. generals stated that the formidable military force of the US would surely help it prevent, at least, from losing. This force could help it at least keep what it has gained, if it could not help it gain what it wanted.

The Americans also believed that their defence plan was perfect and with its thick fire-power, its depth and its long-range detecting devices, this defence system would be a "meat-grinder for the Viet Cong".

On the strength of these calculations, Abrams showed great trust in the effectiveness of his defensive strategy. Just at the moment when American commanders were bragging

IN their fight against the U.S. imperialist local war of aggression, our people have been continuously achieving tremendous and all-sided successes.

Under the glorious banner of the South Viet Nam NLF, from the end of 1965 to the beginning of 1967, the South Vietnamese armed forces and people successfully fought off two U.S. "dry-season strategic offensives". In early Spring 1968, with their great general offensives and uprisings, they dealt a deadly blow at the U.S. aggressors and their lackeys, sent them sliding downhill and forced them back onto the defensive in all battlefields. Meanwhile, the Northern armed forces and people defeated the U.S. war of destruction. The considerable victory of our entire people compelled the U.S.

The U.S. aggressors are confronted with great difficulties and irreconcilable contradictions. For all their obliquity and perfidy, they will have to retreat step by step and head for complete failure. Our people are winning battle after battle and, in the flush of their victory and in the foreground of difficulties and ordeals, are vigorously and steadily bringing their fight against U.S. aggression for national salvation to final victory.

that "it would be a real problem for the communists to mount attacks", this year's early Spring offensives of the South Viet Nam armed forces and people erupted from Quang Tri to the Cape of Ca Mau, from the jungled mountains of the Western Highlands to the coastal plain of Central Viet Nam. For all their precautions, the Americans were caught unawares and badly thrown.

The offensive struck an initial and timely blow at the Nixon administration which was obstinately pursuing the war. It inflicted very heavy losses in man-power and war material on the U.S.-puppets, especially the American troops. U.S. headquarters admitted that "American battle casualties in early 1969 were heavier than those for early Spring 1968". It breached the U.S. strong defence lines, wiped out a number of troop encampments and violently rocked its defence system.

(Continued page 7)

Viet Nam AND THE WORLD

Viet Nam — Cambodia Friendship Further Strengthened

THIS new May 9 marked a new and happy step in the strengthening of the friendly relations between the peoples of Viet Nam and Cambodia. On that day, the Kingdom of Cambodia and the South Viet Nam NLF, issued a communique on their decision to raise their diplomatic relations to embassy level.

Official relations between the NLF and Cambodia were established on June 22, 1965, two days before the decision taken by the DRVN and the Cambodia governments to exchange ambassadors. In his June 1965 message to President Nguyen Huu Tho on the occasion of the anniversary of this historical event, Head of State Norodom Sihanouk stressed: "For us, the setting-up of these relations was a political and diplomatic confirmation of the total support we had been showing to the legitimate resistance of the Vietnamese people to their aggressors and their mercenaries."

The May 9, 1966 communique spelled out the continuing consolidation and expanding relations of friendship, solidarity and mutual assistance between the Vietnamese and the Khmer peoples. To the Vietnamese people, it supplied a great encouragement in their on-going fight against U.S. aggression for national salvation.

Over the last years, the Vietnamese people have

always enjoyed valuable and fruitful cooperation from Head of State Norodom Sihanouk, the Cambodian Royal Government and the brotherly Khmer people. On Feb. 1, 1969 Head of State Norodom Sihanouk and the Cambodian Royal Government made public a communique expressing full support to the just positions of the DRVN and the NLF delegations to the Paris Conference. Denouncing U.S. maneuvers to prolong the military occupation of South Viet Nam by American troops and to impose on the South Viet Nam people a U.S.-installed puppet regime, the statement emphasized, "Cambodia holds that the establishment of peace can be achieved only by the unconditional evacuation of the American troops from South Viet Nam and the recognition of the sacred rights of the Vietnamese people to settle their own affairs without foreign intervention or interference." In March 1969, his message to President Nguyen Huu Tho on the occasion of the 4th anniversary of the conference in Indochinese Peoples, Head of State Norodom Sihanouk declared: "Our Vietnamese brothers and sisters who are unreserved support for their fight against the American occupiers and aggressors who are bent upon denying them the right to settle their own affairs without foreign interference."

The new diplomatic move taken by the Cambodian Royal Government and the NLF, which fully meets the eager aspiration of both peoples for a further consolidation of their friendship is an active contribution to the common fight of the Vietnamese, Khmer and all other Indochinese peoples which has won considerable successes and is heading straight for victory.

NEW YORK TIMES (USA), May 9:
The NLF offer of a ten-point peace plan at Paris Thursday represents a potentially significant step toward a Viet Nam settlement.

ASAHI SHIMBUN (Japan) is reported by JPS, as publishing on May 10 an editorial calling for "careful consideration of the South Viet Nam National Front for Liberation's proposal."

The proposal advanced by the NLF delegation at the Paris talks was described by the editorial as "a comprehensive and flexible suggestion" noting that "no one will be able to object to the principles of the suggestion based on national self-determination."

The specific suggestion for the establishment of a provisional government to supervise the holding of a general election was also welcomed by the editorial as "something rational and appropriate."

LE MONDE (France), May 10:
Once again, eyes are turning to the NLF in Washington... The NLF plan may help political forces and personalities hitherto isolated to offer their services for the formation of a provisional coalition government, which would accentuate the isolation of the Saigon cabinet. Realism should inspire Washington to give a positive answer.

FRANCE-SOIR (France), May 11:
The Front's initiative thus seems to represent a positive element and a step forward.

MOSCOW RADIO (USSR), May 10:
Viet Nam settlement proposals by the National Front for Liberation place responsibility for peace on the hands of the people of South Viet Nam on Washington. Now that the South Viet Nam National Front for Liberation has put forth a concrete plan for a peaceful settlement, the issue depends on

World Press Hails NFL 10-Point Overall Solution

Paris talks was described by the editorial as "a comprehensive and flexible suggestion" noting that "no one will be able to object to the principles of the suggestion based on national self-determination."

Why Is U.S. Aggression...

The Americans have been unable to achieve the objectives of their defensive strategy while their strategic measures have proved their impotence or poor effectiveness, contrary to their calculations. Their preventive operations, far from forestalling PLAF attacks, turned out to be costly for them because they

Heels of Achilles of U.S. defensive strategy

is immediately upset and, at times, U.S. fire bases themselves become an obstacle to G.I.'s fighting inside their encampments. In Tra Cao, the Liberation fighters, on three occasions, wiped out 3 U.S. battalions; in these battles, U.S. artillery, tanks, air power, local mobile troops were stripped of their sting. Once the PLAF is in a position to overrun an encampment held by a mixed U.S. battalion lying right in its thick defense belt, defense in the form of "troop encampments" is immediately doomed. The Americans must choose either to shrink back still further for the establishment of bigger encampments, or to change the whole of their defense disposition.



Destruction of enemy military force is objective number one of any war, and is the primary standard of effectiveness of any drive of military operations. Only by wiping out a large amount of enemy manpower is it possible to alter the balance of forces on the battlefield. At the present juncture, this success assumes a significance all the greater as it has not caused heavy losses to the enemy and costed them little with many difficulties on the battlefield has also caused the enemy to be in a predicament right behind their own lines. The serious American battle casualties have produced a stir in American public opinion, made Congress more intractable and plunged the Nixon administration into first crisis only a month after its installation. This has been acknowledged by the American press.

Since last year's Spring general offensives, the new period of the resistance to U.S. aggression for national salvation of our entire people has been making vigorous and steady strides. By combining major, medium and small unit engagements and large-scale and regular actions, by coordinating activities in all the three areas—jungled mountains, cities and delta plain—and in the three-pronged arm struggle, political action and agitation work among the enemy, and by attacking the enemy on all the three fronts, military, political and diplomatic, our people are bringing into full play the overall strength of revolutionary war and are going from one great victory to another. The people's war of the South Vietnamese armed forces and people has constantly made new progress in the conduct of the war, in combat methods, in fighting quality. That is why the longer they fight, the more successes they win.

THE spokesman of the Supreme Command of the Laoan People's Liberation Army issued on May 9 a statement severely condemning the recent "nibbling attacks" by the U.S. imperialists and the Vietnamese administration against the free zone under the control of the Laoan Patriotic Front in Xiang Khong province.

News from Laos

The statement released by Khaoan Pathet Lao (KPL) reads:
Recently, the U.S. imperialists and their henchmen launched "nibbling attacks" on Muong Phang, Muong Nuan, Xiang Khong provinces, capital and its vicinity. They sent hosts of jet and propeller-driven planes on force bombing raids, destroying hamlets and villages and razing to the ground Xiang Khong town. Their troops carried out destruction, mass murder, raped women, plundered civilian property and impounded a number of local people into concentration camps in the area under their control.

US Puppets' Nibbling Attacks on Free Zone in Xiang Khong

and their lackeys have not yet given up the use of armed force to nibble at the liberated areas under the control of the Laoan Patriotic Front, in an attempt to achieve their aggressive scheme and turn Laos into a new-type colony and military base of the U.S. They have repeatedly launched operations such as operation "Xam Xon" in 1964 against the free area stretching from Hin Thap to Kien Cam (northern Vietnamese province and southern Laos Prabang province); operation "Xam Xon" in late 1964 against the southern and northern areas along Highway 9; operation "Xam Xon" in late 1965 against the liberated zone in Kham Muang province; and in August 1966, they struck at the Nam Bac area lying deep in

territory of the DRVN, the U.S. imperialists have been intensifying their aerial bombardments on the Laoan liberated zone to an unprecedented level of fierceness.

Of late, as U.S. Defense Secretary Melvin Laird admitted, the US imperialists have ordered American troops to make incursions into Laoan border areas.

The aforesaid rabid acts of war of the U.S. imperialists and their henchmen seriously violate the 1962 Geneva Agreement on Laos, infringe upon the fundamental national rights of the Laoan people and constitute an insolent challenge to the peoples in Indo-China, South-East Asia and the world.

They have aroused utter indignation among the Laoan people throughout the country. These have risen up in increasing numbers and have inflicted due punishment on the aggressors and the traitors. Since the enemy started their raids on the Xiang Khong area, the Laoan patriotic armed forces and people have put out of action over 600 of them and shot down 21 aircraft of various kinds.

The assaults on the Xiang Khong liberated area once again laid bare the aggressive and bellicose nature of the U.S. imperialists and their henchmen.

The Supreme Command of the Laoan People's Liberation Army strongly condemns this war intensification of the U.S. imperialists and their stooges and sternly warns them that they must bear full responsibility for all the consequences of their acts.

The LPLA, together with the other patriotic armed forces and the entire people of Laos under the leadership of the Laoan Patriotic Front, will resolutely do yet heavier counter-blow and exact from the U.S. imperialists and their henchmen the highest price for their frenzied acts of aggression, and foil all their escalations.

The Americans had set up many defense belts to make mutual support feasible, yet when the strongest belt in the centre (from 30 to 50 km from Saigon) was pierced, the inner belt immediately came under heavy pressure while the outermost one proved less effective. In the recent onsets, when the PLAF struck hard at Bien Hoa, Dong Da, Tra Cao, Ben Thanh, etc. (the hard belt in the centre manned by the Americans), the Americans had to abandon the outer belt in haste in order to strengthen the inner belt protecting Saigon (1). It is clear that the U.S. multi-layer defence system has been built to resist adverse assaults from without, which makes it less effective in dealing with the people's war whose forces are available everywhere for on-the-spot actions against the US-puppets. Once the U.S. strongest defence belt gives in, its defence system as a whole becomes cranky and weak and shakes badly.

The Americans have organised troops encampments in the form of enclaves in each belt with thick firepower arrangement and with the support of mobile units in each area. Yet, when the PLAF are strong enough to destroy these enclaves with their fast and effective weapons, the U.S. fire-power arrangement

part of the enemy's manpower (more than 104,000 men) including a large amount of grade A manpower, the enemy's casualties alone ran to 52,000. The results obtained were bigger than those in the early Spring 1965 offensives (2). This is our great accomplishment.

The current offensives clearly show that the longer the PLAF fight, the stronger they become, and that they constantly find fresh facilities for further successes. Since the night of Feb. 23, the South Vietnamese armed forces and people have been assaulting the enemy without let-up or respite, causing casualties along the front to 50,000 (3). Recently, the PLAF operating especially in Eastern Nam Bo (4) and Central Trung Bo (4) had many

Growing strengthening and maturity of PLAF, new upsurge of revolutionary war

part of the enemy's manpower (more than 104,000 men) including a large amount of grade A manpower, the enemy's casualties alone ran to 52,000. The results obtained were bigger than those in the early Spring 1965 offensives (2). This is our great accomplishment.

- (1) For instance, the withdrawal of the First Air Cav. from the Loc Ninh area and the Northwestern part of Tay Ninh province to the vicinity of Saigon.
- (2) According to Communiqué No 13 of the PLAF on Apr. 6, 1966 (See Viet Nam Courier No 212, Apr. 14, 1966).
- (3) Sector comprising a dozen provinces surrounding Saigon.
- (4) Sector comprising the provinces of Tay Ninh, Binh Duong, between Da Nang and Nha Trang.

MILITARY OPERATIONS

JUST at the moment when Nixon, his secretaries and generals—who echo the Saigon quislings—claimed that the military situation in South Viet Nam was more than ever favourable to them and that the PLAF were winded and incapable of mounting any important actions, the world witnesses since the night of May 11 last, another flare-up offensives by the patriotic forces. From the region bordering on the DMZ (17th parallel) to the Mekong delta, from the western borderland to the coastal region of the (South) China Sea, hundreds of major targets came under fire in the same night: Divi-

sion and brigade HQs, air bases, positions in at least twenty towns and many dozen of sub-sector CPs and district capitals... Each well defended sectors as Saigon, Da Nang, Hue, Cam Ranh were also struck.

The enemy command has deliberately tried to minimize the importance and scope of these attacks which are still going on at present. Nevertheless, the western press recognized that they had surpassed in size the "Tet onslaughts" launched on the night of February 22, 1969 and lasting nearly two months with heavy adverse losses and the famous Tet

offensives of last year.

Given the large scale of the operations, we are not yet in a position to give full reports on them. According to initial account, released by *Giai Phong* Press agency up to now, the military operations since the night of May 11 can be summarized as follows:

Before the eruption of this new recrudescence of PLAF actions, three successful engagements were fought on Road No. 20 (Saigon and Dalat), section between Tuc Trung and Dinh Quan, 65-84 km northeast of Saigon on May 8, 9, 11 and 12 against the units of puppet Infantry Division 18. On May 8, a battalion of Regiment 43 was wiped out at Tam Bung, 7km southeast of Tuc Trung: 200 enemy troops were killed or wounded, many others cap-

tured, 2 choppers downed.

On May 9, 3 battalions coming to the rescue of the battered outfits were intercepted: in 40 minutes' fighting one of them was knocked out, the other two decimated, over 300 puppet soldiers killed, many others wounded, who were incidentally given the opportunity to be killed by B-52 carpet-bombing, a short later in detail. Meanwhile, other PLAF elements destroyed a puppet gun emplacement at Dinh Quan, putting out of action a company and destroying two 160mm mortars. On May 11, a motorized column coming from Dinh Quan was waylaid near La Nga bridge and the 2nd armoured squadron of puppet Infantry Division 18 lost in the ambush 13 M. 113 armoured cars and took 130

casualties. The following day, the patriotic forces wiped out a motorized unit coming from La Nga, destroying 17 vehicles including 11 tanks and armoured cars, and inflicting 120 puppet casualties. Meanwhile a battalion leaving Dinh Quan was fought back with serious enemy losses.

It was also reported that in the attack against Da Nang airbase on the night of April 27, the PLAF had put out of action over 500 enemy soldiers, destroyed 300 vehicles, 10 aircraft, nearly 150,000 tons of bombs and munitions and 10 million litres of fuel.

At Kontum airfield, stormed on the night of May 10, 230 GIs were killed or wounded and 12 aircraft destroyed.

Saigon

16,000 Motor Pedicab Drivers Claim End to Forced Unemployment

IT is reported by the Saigon press that recently 16,000 motor pedicab drivers have raised again their voices forcefully against the Saigon authorities' arbitrary withdrawal of their driving licences, which has reduced them to prolonged unemployment.

At the beginning of 1968, frightened by the attacks of the P.L.A., the puppet authorities, without any plausible reason, arrested 8,000 motor cabs and withdrew the licences of their drivers, suspecting them of having had a hand in the Liberation fighters' exploits. The vehicles uncared for and exposed to the sun and rain, had been ruined by rust. Then after repeated protests from their drivers, some motor pedicabs were returned to them but not their driving licences. Vague placating promises had been made never to be lived up to.

Impatient with these dilatory manoeuvres of the puppet rulers, the motor pedicab drivers called a meeting and decided to send a delegation to press for steps by the Saigon authorities to put an end to their protracted unemployment.

Their struggle has enjoyed the support of all Saigon workers.

Thieu's "Freedom of the Press"

○ N May 13, the Saigon quislings closed down the Saigon paper *Dan* (the People) under the pretext that it had taken to task Saigon's agrarian policy, Western agencies reported.

Besides, public opinion was affected by the ban claimed loudly by Nguyen Van Thieu on another paper, *Tan Dan* (New People), edited by Nguyen Ba Luong, President of the Saigon "House of Representatives", because *Tan Dan* had carried the rumour that Tran Van Huong was contemplating "resignation" of his "premiership" and denunciation of Nguyen Van Thieu as "a traitor to the country" and a "speculator in his compatriots' blood." Saigon opinion underlined that Huong's rumoured resignation brought to broad daylight the bitter dissension between Thieu and Huong.

Also in his paper *Tan Dan*, Nguyen Ba Luong quoted Nguyen Cao Ky—who had been for a year deprived by his rival Nguyen Van Thieu of all his men one by one—as saying that the South Viet Nam people “no longer liked the ‘nationalist regime’” (the Saigon puppet regime). Nguyen Ba Luong concurred with Ky elaborating: “Many people, many groups of people who style themselves nationalists are in fact spongers, parasites, and parasites of the people. They are a terrible, a terrible malversations to the detriment of the broad social strata, chiefly the worse off ones, among them middle income-bracket public servants who are now roughing it.”

Main May 11 PLAF night attacks
and enemy losses (incomplete)

Enemy companies wiped out

Road conveyors put out of action and

Attack against enemy troops in operation

Battalion	CPs
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Regiment CPs

Brigade HQs

Division MOI

Alfield

11/11/11

mineral capital or milita

sub-sector CPs attacked

